

## **Consensus Statements from the 2004 Learning Disabilities Roundtable<sup>1</sup>**

In developing its regulatory recommendations, the 2004 Learning Disabilities Roundtable provided the guidelines to serve as a “best practice” for determination of eligibility of students with specific learning disabilities through the use of Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI). The *2004 Learning Disabilities Roundtable Consensus Statements* provide guidance for identification of learning disabilities in the areas of the Nature of, Identification of, Eligibility for, and Intervention with students with specific learning disabilities.

### **Nature of Specific Learning Disabilities**

1. The concept of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) is valid, supported by strong converging evidence.
2. Specific learning disabilities are neurologically based and intrinsic to the individual.
3. Individuals with SLD show intra-individual differences in skills and abilities.
4. Specific learning disabilities persist across the life span, though manifestations and intensity may vary as a function of developmental stage and environmental demands.
5. Specific learning disabilities may occur in combination with other disabling conditions, but they are not due to other conditions, such as mental retardation, behavioral disturbance, lack of opportunities to learn, primary sensory deficits, or multilingualism.
6. Specific learning disabilities are evident across ethnic, cultural, language and economic groups.

### **Identification**

1. Identification should include a student-centered, comprehensive evaluation and problem solving approach that ensures students who have a specific learning disability are efficiently identified.
2. Regular education must assume active responsibility for delivery of high quality instruction, research-based interventions, and prompt identification of individuals at risk while collaborating with special education and related services personnel.

### **Eligibility**

1. The ability-achievement discrepancy formula need not be used for determining eligibility and should not be used as the sole criterion for determination of eligibility.
2. Decisions regarding eligibility for special education services must draw from information collected from a comprehensive individual evaluation using multiple methods and sources of relevant information.
3. Decisions on eligibility must be made through an interdisciplinary team, using informed clinical judgment, directed by relevant data, and based on student needs and strengths.
4. Decisions on eligibility must be made in a timeline manner.
5. Based on an individualized evaluation and continuous progress monitoring, a student who has been identified as having a specific learning disability may need different levels of special education and related services under IDEA at various times during the school experience.

### **Intervention**

1. The field should continue to advocate for the use of evidence-based practices. However, in areas where an adequate research base does not exist, data should be gathered on the success of promising practices
2. Schools and educators must have access to information about scientifically-based practices and promising practices that have been validated in the settings where they are to be implemented.
3. Students with SLD require intensive, iterative (recursive), explicit scientifically-based instruction that is monitored on an on-going basis to achieve academic success.
4. Students with SLD require a continuum of intervention options through regular and special education across all grades and ages.
5. Interventions must be timely and matched to the specific learning and behavioral needs of the student.
6. An intervention is most effective when it is implemented consistently, with fidelity to its design, and at a sufficient level of intensity and duration.

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<sup>1</sup> Comments and Recommendations on Regulatory Issues under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Public Law 108-446, February 2005.